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PROSPECTUS

OF THE

OXFORD MERCURY,

AND

MIDLAND COUNTY CHRONICLE;

A NEW WEEKLY PAPER,

TO BE PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING.

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PRO REGE, LEGE, ARIS ET FOCIS.

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THE general voice of the Public in favour of the propriety of a new Provincial Paper, having first called forth our endeavours, and legitimated our scheme, we feel ourselves thus generously relieved from the necessity of apologizing for intrusion: but, at the same time, we are the more convinced of the difficulty and the duty of maintaining that partiality which awaits our commencement; and of proving by our conduct, that we are anxious to deserve it, and fearful to lose it.

The public favour we estimate high. It is that honourable acquisition which can neither be bought nor sold. It may be alienated by indifference; it may be lost by presumption: but it will never be withheld from those who employ useful talents, or honest industry, in the pursuit. Whether our abilities or our exertions are equal to the office we have assumed, and the departments we respectively fill, must remain to be tried. The conscious desire of doing our best, inspires the confidence of hope. If we fail in procuring an extensive patronage, and in giving general satisfaction, we shall at least have the pleasure to reflect, that it arose from causes not in our power to prevent—from want of abilities, not a deficiency of zeal.

A COUNTRY NEWSPAPER, conducted on proper principles, is an object of some importance. It demands higher qualifications and greater diligence than are generally supposed, or are commonly employed. Its influence on the district in which it circulates, is often extensively felt; and the beneficial purposes it is calculated to answer, should be gratefully acknowledged.

In every scheme of this kind, an intimate knowledge of local circumstances, and a ready attention to communicate every species of useful information, appear to us indispensable requisites.

At this eventful period, PUBLIC NEWS is peculiarly interesting. We mean to present our Readers with such a FAITHFUL and FULL selection, as will enable them to form a proper idea of the grand scenes now passing on the Theatre of Europe. PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES will be detailed with accuracy; and Public Measures IMPARTIALLY considered.

Attached

Attached both by principle and duty to the Constitution in Church and State, we will ever support and enforce the love of order, and the interests of GOVERNMENT: but we profess ourselves INDEPENDENT; and therefore *Measures*, not *Men*, shall have our sanction or our censure.

The MIDLAND COUNTIES, the Garden and the Granary of England, are at once the scene of our labours, and the objects of our attention. The weekly Market Days, in the greatest number of respectable Towns, within the probable circulation of our Paper, falling on, or immediately after the day of our Publication, we shall be able to present our Country Readers with the state of the London and other considerable Markets, within a wide circle; and at the same time furnish them with the freshest Articles of Intelligence, interspersed with occasional hints and improvements, in Agriculture, Arts, and Commerce. We have chosen the day, which, in our judgment, is the best of all others adapted to the circumstances of the circle in which we wish to move: it enables us to give the greatest variety of early information, from the greatest variety of sources; and we trust our superiority in this respect will be soon seen and confessed.

But though UTILITY is the grand feature in our proposed Publication, we are not forgetful that Amusement should be blended with Instruction. Harmless wit and innocent pleasantry will here find a ready reception; the effusions of genius a secure asylum. The communications of the ingenious, particularly on subjects of local improvement or advantage, will be highly esteemed; and, from the connections already formed, we have some right to expect a liberal supply. In short, with regard to the LITERARY part of the OXFORD MERCURY, we wish it to possess such a degree of merit, as will not disgrace the dignified place from which it issues; and as will give it a value, to those who are at the trouble of preserving it, beyond the passing day.

ADVERTISEMENTS will be punctually attended to, and accurately and distinctly printed. Our arrangements in this respect will, we trust, entitle us to the support of all those who have an interest in the PUBLICITY of their concerns.

Beautiful new Types are cast on purpose for this undertaking by Mr. CASLON, Letter-Founder to HIS MAJESTY. In a word, for QUANTITY, QUALITY, and ELEGANCE combined, we flatter ourselves we shall be able to challenge competition.

The first Paper will be printed on WEDNESDAY, August 5, 1795, and will be delivered *gratis*. It is however requested, that all who are inclined to honour it with their support, will be pleased to send their ORDERS and ADVERTISEMENTS as early as possible to Mr. W. HANWELL, Bookseller, in the *Turle*; Mr. R. WATTS, Printer, at the *Mercury-Office, High-street, Oxford*; Mr. TAYLOR, Agent, *Warwick-court, London*; and to the different Agents in the Country Towns.

To conclude.—As this Paper originates from an attention to the PUBLIC WISH and EXPECTATION, to the patronage and candour of that PUBLIC, it is most respectfully consigned. The PROPRIETORS are proud of having brought it to the birth; and they look forward with a well-grounded confidence to the period of its maturity, when it will be able to repay its Parents' solicitude, and to answer the most sanguine hopes of its Friends.

OXFORD, July 23, 1795.



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